AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of verifying a right to use an element of a web page hosted by a web server, the method comprising the steps of:

responsive directly to a request from a client for a web page hosted by a web server, storing an indicator that said client has requested a web page hosted by said web server;

responsive to a request from a client for an element of said web page that is <u>stored in a separate file from the web page and</u> displayed as an embedded element of said web page, checking for said indicator that said client has requested said web page from said web server; and

responding to the request from the client for said element of said web page hosted by the web server according to the result of said checking step.

2. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said storing step comprises:

returning to the client a persistent client state object having an identifier therein; and

wherein said checking step comprises checking for said persistent client state object having the identifier therein returned by said client, prior to said responding step.

3. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2 wherein the persistent client state object is a cookie.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2 wherein the persistent client state object expires after a pre-determined period of time.

5. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said storing step comprises adding an identity of said client to a table associated with said web server; and wherein said checking step comprises checking for said client identity in said table, prior to said responding step.

6. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said table includes an expiration time associated with a respective client identity in said table.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of verifying a right to use an element of a web page hosted by a web server, the method comprising the steps of:

responsive to a request from a client for an element of a web page that is stored in a separate file from the web page and displayed as an embedded element of said web page, checking said request for an indicator that said request results from a client request for a web page hosted by an authorised web server, the indicator having been provided to the client by the authorised web server in direct response to a request from the client for the web page hosted by the authorised web server; and

responsive to the presence of such an indicator, responding to the request from the client with said element of a web page.

8. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 7 wherein said indicator comprises a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for said web page, and said checking step comprises checking that said web page URL is from an authorised web server.

9. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 7 wherein said indicator comprises a meta-tag incorporated in web pages from authorised servers, and said checking step comprises checking that said meta-tag is from an authorised web server.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said meta-tag is a PICS compliant tag.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 7 operable in one of: said web server or a proxy server connecting said web client to said web server.

12. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 7 wherein if said checking step fails to detect said indicator, said responding step comprises returning a message for display at the client to the client.

13. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 7 wherein if said checking step fails to detect said indicator, said responding step comprises returning a substitute element to the client.

14. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 7 wherein if said checking step fails to detect said indicator, said responding step comprises returning no response to the client.

15. (Currently Amended) In a web client, a method of verifying a right to use an element of a web page hosted by a web server, the method comprising the steps of:

    responsive directly to encountering a request for an element of a web page that is <u>stored in a separate file from the web page and</u> displayed as an embedded element of said web page, checking that said request results from a client request for a web page hosted by an authorised web server; and

    responsive to such a request, requesting said web page element from a server hosting said web page element.

16. (Previously Presented) A computer program product for verifying a right to use an element of a web page, the computer program product comprising:

   a computer-readable storage medium having a substrate; and

   program data encoded in the substrate of the computer-readable storage medium, wherein the program data comprises means for performing the steps of claim 1, claim 7 or claim 15.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer program comprising computer program code means <u>stored on a computer readable medium and</u> adapted to perform all the steps of any one of claims 1 to 15 when said program is run on a computer.

18. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein if said checking step fails to detect said indicator, said responding step comprises returning a message for display at the client to the client.

19. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein if said checking step fails to detect said indicator, said responding step comprises returning a substitute element to the client.

20. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein if said checking step fails to detect said indicator, said responding step comprises returning no response to the client.